

# Vermont Libraries: Transformed and Funded



Presentation by Christine Graham  
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# We aren't in Grandma's Library any more....

- o Books, Newspapers and Encyclopedias
- o Municipal support was quiet and unchanging
- o Dusty and musty
- o Late fees made a difference
- o Hospitals and Libraries were swamped with volunteers...
- o Bequests from town 'fathers,' and more often their widows, funded the library



# It's a New Golden Age for Libraries

- o It's more than books
- o It's 'the Community Living Room'
- o A Safe place
- o Technology for all
- o Café atmosphere
- o *You don't have to whisper anymore!.....*
- o *But you DO have to fundraise!*

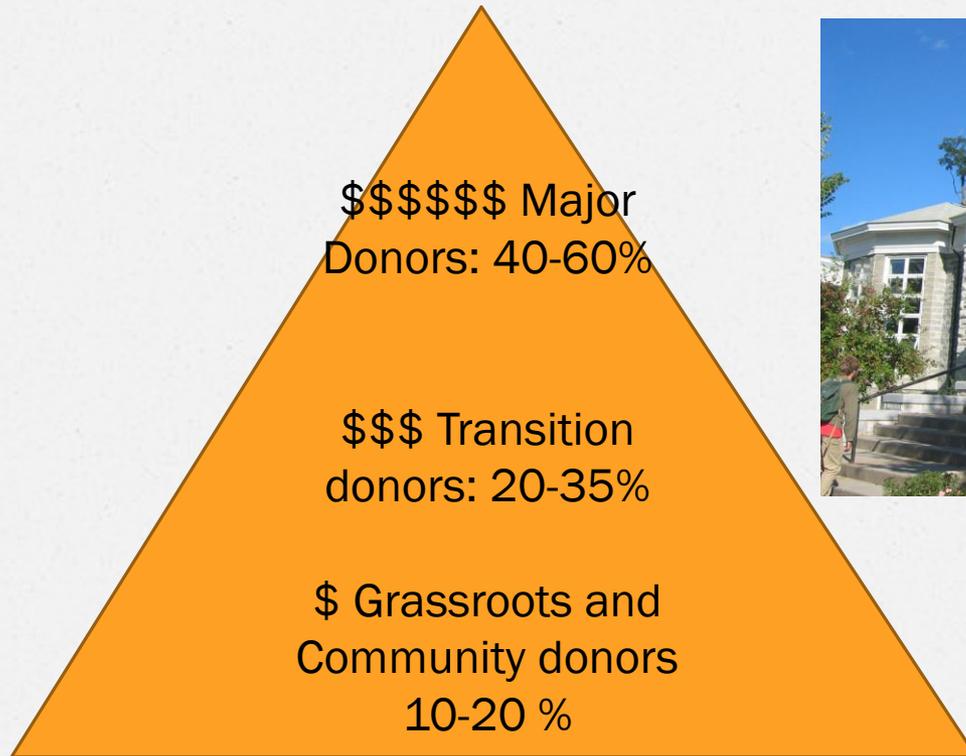


# Fundraising Facts

- o You need a **Goal and a Case for Support**
- o Major Gifts are critical
- o You must RELATE to your donors, in person!
- o Nothing happens by accident.. you must ask!
- o Events are for awareness more than money
- o Online fundraising is still minor, but it's essential
- o It takes a village: staff, board, and the Friends



# The Basics: Fundraising Theory



# You Need a Plan....



- o An annual schedule for visits, letters, events, and more...
- o Lists of donors and prospects
- o A basic fundraising database
- o Many forms of communication
- o Ongoing personal solicitations
- o Multiple ways to say thank you
- o Good record-keeping
- o Analysis of results and reports on giving

# Learn How Donors Think...then help them change!

- o The higher their capacity, the more they think:
  - o Libraries are for books
  - o They BUY their books
  - o They think everyone has a computer
  - o They already pay taxes to town government....so why make a donation?
  - o Libraries are free, right?
- o You can change their minds!



# Building Your Donor Base



# Think and Breathe Fundraising

- o Ask for advice
- o Build relationships
- o Personalize your appeals
- o Get people IN the library
- o Offer free educational events for different demographics
- o Use time strategically
- o **Ask for money: be bold!**



# Learn from Others

- o Observe good fundraising
- o Read to learn!
- o Understand the culture of your community
- o Build a Team to help
- o Build continuity: fundraising is forever!
- o Be a donor....

Believe this: Giving offers joy for the donor and the recipient!



# Include Forever Funding

- o Create a **planned giving** program.... With policies and advisors
- o Encourage more than bequests
- o Set up a Gift Annuity program
- o Focus on the donor and on community benefit
- o Partner with the VCF
- o Don't be shy: talk about planned gifts!
- o Develop simple, inviting, logical, informative materials



# Understanding Terminology

- Revocable gifts: The donor makes a promise now.... ....and the gift happens at their death. They can change their mind any time and as often as they like. This is NICE but NOT PERFECT for you!
- Irrevocable gifts: The donor makes a commitment now, and cannot change it. The donor reaps financial benefits in their lifetime, saves their heirs stress or money, and you can count on the gift.



# Planned Gifts to Aim For:

## Irrevocable:

- o Charitable Gift Annuities and Trusts
- o Life insurance where the library owns the policy
- o Real property such as a life estate

## Revocable:

- o Bequests (for all kinds of assets)
- o IRA's, 401K's
- o Life insurance where the library is the beneficiary



# Step One: Educate Yourself

- o Libraries need to be fundraising savvy. Your team should:
  - o Attend training programs
  - o Join fundraising groups
  - o Observe fundraising everywhere
  - o Visit estate planners
  - o Ask for advice
  - o Read and Research!



# Step Two: Educate your Community

- o Don't be apologetic or shy
- o Communicate the library's value
- o Get people in the door
- o Use social media
- o Host fun events.... For awareness not big gifts
- o Visit people regularly and build their commitment



# Libraries Are Adapting

- o Identify the need
  - o Learn to tell your story
  - o Establish a 501(c)(3)
  - o Recruit and train a Board and “Friends” who will help
  - o Build an image of vitality!
  - o Partner with other local organizations and causes
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- o Be proud of your library and promote it!



# Ask Questions



Christine Graham, Joyce Cellars, Shana Trombley  
CPG Enterprises, Inc.  
cpgfundraising.com

[cpgraham@sover.net](mailto:cpgraham@sover.net); [joyce.cellars@gmail.com](mailto:joyce.cellars@gmail.com); [shanatrombley@gmail.com](mailto:shanatrombley@gmail.com)

802-343-0659